

A Private

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LETTER

of Satisfaction to a

FRIEND



- Concerning {
1. The Sleep of the Soul.
 2. The State of the Soul after death, till the Resurrection.
 3. The reason of the seldom appearing of Separate Spirits.
 4. Prayer for departed Souls whether lawful or no

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Origen.

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SIR,

I Received yours——. In which upon the sudden death and abruption of your dear Lady, having wasted her silent hours in pensive sighs, and moistned her funeral Cypresse with a shower of tears; you have now converted the Grieffs into Patience and a noble Charity, and made your sorrows the Scene of Divine Speculations, concerning the memory of your dead Saint: And, admitting her into your retired thoughts such as she desired to be, that is, amiable and pleasant, Not to discompose the quiet serenity of your mind by any afflictive circumstance, but to administer a lenitive to your sadness, and elevate and advance your joyes;

To this end, you have propounded these following Questions: To which out of a due sense of gratitude and of that service and obedience I owe you, I shall

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not detract to give you the best Solution I can.

1. *Whether the Soul, when separated from this terrestrial body, sleeps till the general Resurrection.*

2. *Whether, upon the quitting this body, she be immediately carryed either to Heaven or Hell?*

3. *Why Separate Souls do seldome appear?*

4. *Whether it be not lawful to pray for our departed Relatives? or, whether the duties and obligations of friendship are extinct by their death?*

That there is in us a Principle of life and motion wholly independent upon matter, and which by an intrinsic virtue actuates this stupid and heavy body we carry about us; I think, there are few so gross and sensual as to deny: At least, if there be any such, I shall not now concern my selfe with them, but take into consideration that odd Hypothesis which some have fallen upon, who fancy the soul (though distinct from the body) to fall into such a profound sleep, as never to be awakened but by that shril-sounding Trump which shall eccho through the arched roof of Heaven, and rouse the dead from the silence of their dor-

dormitories, to appear before the just tribunal of the Son of God. Which if examined to the bottom will prove little less than a piece of Epicurism and a branch of new-modell'd Atheism, to exclude and banish all hopes of a future reward in those immortal regions of love and joy out of the minds and spirits of men. It will be necessary as well for the promoting of righteousness and holiness, as the discouraging vice and impiety, to shew the lubricous and brittle foundation upon which this doctrine is built.

In order to which, we may consider Argum. 1.
the Soul of man as a spiritual Essence capable of acting and subsisting (if God so please) after she is disengaged from this weight of dull mortality, to which by a vital harmony and essential congruity she became at first united. Which happy Crasis being worn out by the length of time, or discomposed through the violence of a disease, or some other disordered motions in the body, that sweet Tye is presently dissolved and broken, and the Soul, freed from her terrestrial prison, becomes a denizon of another world. For, what cords or springs can retard a spirit? Or what walls can detain

tain and imprison so subtil and penetrative a Being as the Soul of man? For, that the Soul at any time separates from the body, is not from her own actual will, but from the vitiated temperament of the body she is united with, which by harsh and uneven motions becomes very unpleasant and disharmonious to her inward sense or plastick life, so that, being once loosened from the body she regains a vital energie or power far more vigorous than before, and attains to a clearer perception of things than when cloystred within these walls of flesh. No law of Fate or Immutability, can stop her flight from the insensate Corps which is no longer in a capacity of entertaining it's departing Guest. So then, this sleep of the soul must be resolved into the cessation of her operations upon her disunion with the body: For, Death, say they, quite obliterates and wipes off all those various phantasms with which the mind was stored here below: which being excited and stirred up in her by the presence of their several objects, now that she is disspread and fallen back, as it were, into that universal Life, can never re-enter her knowledg, nor can she be conscious of ought, but
must

must lye thus senselesse for ever, unless that benign Spirit which first brought her into Being, awaken her from this mortal Sleep.

But he that shall consider those several powers and faculties the great Creator of the World who made all things well, bestowed upon the Soul of man; and how orderly in their due time and place they awaken into act, will be forced to confess, that Infinite Wisdom has so happily contrived it, that she shall never want proportionate instruments of action, whatsoever state the various revolutions of an unerring Providence shall place her in. Those clear eyes of Heaven and divine Omniscience foreseeing all the possible fates of men, beheld them not only as being inhabitants of this terrestrial World, but as those that were not farr removed from the confines of eternity, and capable of dwelling in that Kingdome of light and glory which no mortal eye can behold and live, and to this end, endued them with such powers as should make them happy both in the enjoyment of themselves and God, in that condition of Being wherein they are. While we are here in this Region of
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mutability, we are in a state of banishment from our native home, and the life of the body grown so powerful and vigorous that the gentle touches and soft vibrations of our more divine part are scarce perceptible within us: Those fatal Inclinations which at first pent up our spirits which lay wide as the World, embracing the Creation in an extensive love, and sunk them down to a boundless indulgence and regard of sense and corporal pleasures, are now most lively and active, and the more near approaches we make to this muddy life, the more gross and seculent are the apprehensions and Idea's of our minds. The scorching flames of Envy and degenerate Malice dry up the gentle dews of heaven that enlarge and widen the soul with a divine fertility; the vile and impure motions of Lust bemire the internal beauty of this Daughter of heaven; and every captive affection captivates her to a new invented pleasure, and a further deflection from her Original and Primitive good. This is the lowest degree of life that is seated in the Soul of man, this is that pleasing Magick which bewitches and enchants the Mind with these poor and contemptible Goods:

Thus

Thus *Adam* lost his Paradise by listening to the charming voice of his new espoused Bride; and thus we fell with him, and became mancipated and enslaved to the body; and that eternal Fire which was first kindled from heaven, sensibly decayed and vanished, and darkness took away the light of the day and hid the beams of truth and righteousness from our eyes, leaving us wandering in a night of error, without any guide, save that now and then a ray of glory pierced through those clammy mists, and left an impression upon us sufficient to let us know that it sprang from an heavenly source and fountain. But when the edge of this luxuriant principle shall be taken off, and men dye to their grosser bodies, another and farr more ample degree of life shall awake in the Soul. For, there being in the spirit of man such a gradual subordination of faculties and all so closely connected to their indispensible head and center, 'tis very natural to conceive, that, upon the extinction or cessation of a lower power, a more extended and enlarged Capacity should arise and spring up in its room. Thus, Death being nothing but a Consopition of

of some inferiour faculties, will be so
 farr from drawing over the whole man
 this benumbing droufiness, that it will
 bring into play those hidden powers,
 which like some keys in musick lay dead
 and silent, till struck by the careful hand
 of Nature to keep up that Vniversal
 Harmony which the Eternal Mind
 wrought in the essential contexture of
 the Creation. All the powers of the
 Soul do not operate at once with an e-
 qual degree of intenseness and vigour,
 but, as the dull and heavy life of sense and
 corporeity is emacerated by repeated
 acts of mortification, and made sequaci-
 ous and obedient to the dictates of the
 intellectual man, so the mind and divine
 life becomes more subtil and abstracted
 from matter, assimilating its self to that
 Holy One whose perfection it is, to be
 wholly spiritual and immaterial. And
 we our selves plainly perceive, that when
 the mind is bent and fully carried out
 upon the contemplation of an object, the
 external Sense is very much debilitated
 and abated, so that the Vibrations of
 corporeal motion upon the Organs both
 of sight and hearing are for a time sus-
 pended and unconcerned, which plainly
 inferrs that the Soul cannot attend to

two distinct powers at the same time in their highest actings and capacities, but that, as the operations of the one are brought low and decrease, so the other are invigorated and augmented. And who can rationally averr that the actings of the soul shall cease when divested of these garments of mortality, since that there is a gradual declension & derivation of all her powers from the perceptive part or first and primary substance of such an essentially-incorporate Spirit as the soul of man? For, the higher life contains and includes the lower, and still as we ascend upward life is more large and compleat till we arrive at the highest of all: which whoever hath thoroughly awakened, is installed in the greatest Happiness, humane nature is capable of; flying beyond the regions of death and dissolution, and seated above the reach of envy and malice, in the great diffusions and communications of heavens glory and beatitude. All life is not destroyed at once, nor can the power of death and the grave exceed the dissolution of the Souls vital congruity of actuating a terrestrial body: whatever looks beyond this, remains safe and secure as the laws of heaven; so that we need not fear, an eternal oblivion
 should

should creep upon us, or that we should slide out of being when we cease to converse with men, and have our Ashes crowded into their narrow urns. To carry on this Argument a little further, and to pleasure and gratifie our fancies: we may conceive the Soul of man to be a Circle whose Center is that noble and divine part full of essential Intellect and perception; the Area, those exterior branches or essential emanations from the first central power and activity, which descend κατ' ὑποσφλάν by abatement from the Primary substance, the will and Reason being the nearest the source of life and vigour, the Imagination a degree lower, from whence we go down to the Senses which take cognisance of external objects and make a true and faithful representation of them in the seat of perception: and still the further they are removed from their origin and Spring, the more straitned and confined they grow till they arrive to the Periphery which is the Plastick and deepest or lowest power, and the most narrow and contracted of all: Thus we see how all the powers of the soul lye in a natural graduality and subordination to the eye and Center of this little World, which
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like the Sun, the bright Eye and Center of the world, fills the whole Aire with rayes of light, to its utmost confines and circumference. Having thus illustrated the Nature and Powers of the Soul, it's easie to imagine (she not being an independent, homogeneal Mass like a lump of matter, but one part the gradual result and efflux of the other) that some vital congruity may be layed asleep, and Death may cause a cessation of the actings of some faculties, without the total consopition of the Soul.

The Moral state and condition of the Argum. 2. soul after death is such, as to every considerative and ingenuous Spirit will give sufficient security against those irrational fears of her Sleep and senselessness when she has left the body.

Though men here strayed from God the fountain of their blis and happiness, and defaced the beautiful Image of their Creator by a vigorous prosecution of the exorbitant motions and pleasures of sense, yet he regards and careth for them, remembers that his own good hands first gave them being, and pities the unhappy miscarriage of so noble a part of his Creation. And therefore, as a tender Mother shoves off her pretty infant from
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her that it may return again with fresh and more ardent embraces ; so God the benign Father of Spirits is pleased for a while to banish his own dear Offspring into this region of mortality, that he may more endear them to himself, and enhance the price of heavenly joy, by begetting in them an impatient desire and breathing after it. And to this end that All-comprehensive Wisdome which made all things well, and fitted the capacities of his Creatures to those severall states they were to run through, hath cloathed the souls of men with coats of skins, and made them inhabitants of the Earth ; nor that they should make the Paternal bounty and indulgence of God an occasion of a riotous licentiousness, and take heart from his kindness to be the more vitious, but to curb their lawless wills, and restrain their irregular appetites, and refine and purifie their minds and Spirits to a high degree of Generosity, Sobriety and Goodness : For, in this life it is that men lay the Trains and Seeds of their future happiness or misery, and that just Nemesis, which passes through the universe, and interestes it self peculiarly in the affairs of rational Agents, will inevitably seize on the Soul when departed from

from her decayed tenement, and convey her to that place and society which the rectitude or obliquity of her moral Nature hath fitted her for. There are two opposite Principles or contrary Natures in the World, between which there is an eternall and irreconcilable Feud, *viz.* Sin & Righteousness; to one of which every man ioyns himself, and becomes a member of a society or body Politick; and carries on *αἰδιον πολέμου*, an immortal warr; Sin is nothing but a deflection from the divine Nature, a transposition or undue connexion and dis-harmonious union of some principles in the Creation, which raises a perturbation and disorder in the Soul of man, and, when confirmed by repeated acts, becomes a habit, and in-crasates & obnubilates the mind, crowding it into narrowness and servility: But righteousness is a concord or agreement and suitableness with those living laws impressed upon every moral agent, when the Soul acts adequately and conformably to those innate notions of truth and holiness, and this enlarges and sets free the Spirit of man from Tyranny and slavery. And hence it comes to pass that the actions of men are not as the transient effects of necessary causes, as a stone to fall

fall downwards; but, being the results of spontaneous principles have a moral influence of good or evil upon their future states and conditions: For, men arrive not to the utmost degrees and completion of goodness or iniquity in a moment; but, as in Naturals, so likewise Morals there is a latitude required; and things ascend gradually to their perfections: and consequently the wicked or righteous Nature respectively spreads it self and incorporates and conjoyns the Soul either with Hell or Heaven in this life. For Hell in a moral sense is nothing but an Orbe of sin and unrighteousness, a state of penury & anxiety, and sucks in and draws, as it were with hidden cords and strings, every thing that is like to it self; so that every wicked man truly carries the beginnings of Hell and misery within his breast; and to this purpose is that of *Porphyry*, *ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπου φύσεως ἰσχυρὰς ἐκπύμας, καὶ ἐκπύμας*. The Spirit is said to be in Hades because it partakes of the dark nature and void of light. But Heaven is the region of serenity and quiet, a state of righteousness, peace and joy, and takes hold of every thing congenerous to its own

own Nature; elevating and winding the spirits of men off from their commerce with vice, and the alluring objects of sense, and transforming them into it's own beauteous Image and pulchritude; and the further they recede from the Cuspis of the love of wickedness and the unrighteous Nature, the more liberty they find; and when once they are so farr risen that the utmost projections of this dark shadow cannot touch them, then are they arrived to an eternal and boundless freedom.

Every man therefore so fatally adjoyning himself either to Heaven or Hell in this life, it will inevitably fall to his share to be happy or miserable when departed out of it; which cannot be, except the Memory and Sense of his past actions return, upon his separation from the body: And that it does so, is not only a probable but necessary consequence from the Nature of the Soul: For, Memory being a radicated faculty of the Soul, and having no greater dependance upon the body than all other exertions and operations of the mind whatsoever, it will remain safe and entire, notwithstanding the various turnings and transmutations of

corporeal principles : Indeed, were Memory, and those other Faculties, which not without great reason we attribute to a knowing and intelligent Principle, the sole effects of the re-action or tremulous motions of certain pieces of matter striking upon each other; it were a necessary deduction from thence, that Death should spoil their sport and quite deface and obliterate whatever their nimble friskings and incertain agitations might represent unto us : but this is already sufficiently demonstrated to our hands, to be both frivolous and precarious by an excellent Person, who has divested Matter of all cogitative powers and properties. And if we well weigh the state of the Soul after death, it will appear that Memory will then be more vivid and lively; and Conscience, which is nothing but a reflexe act of Memory, more sensible and awakened: For the great cause of all our weak and imperfect actions in this life, is the stubbornness and inobsequiousness of matter to the powers of the Soul, whereby they become dull, languishing, and inactive; but when death shall give us entrance into another World, and the Soul united to a more ductil and pliable vehicle,

vehicle, her operations will become more sprightly, and the Memory bring into view many and diverse things which, before it was not able to command; & the Conscience afflict or cheer according to her department in the former life. Neither is this any more than what we find already in the natures and causes of things: For, if Memory being lost by the violence of a disease or some other extraordinary indisposition of the body; yet returns and is regained upon the cessation and amotion of the distemper, and reduction of the spirits to their pristine temperament: I see no reason, why it should thus totally be despoiled by Death, there being oft-times a greater change and perturbation in some malignant diseases, than we see happen to sound and healthy persons, whom the casualties of War or other sudden Fate hath brought to an untimely end. This only difference is assigned (which yet when severely examined carries no great moment with it) that when Nature or Art hath expelled the morbidick matter, and restored the body to a healthfull vigour, and the spirits, depurated and rectified from their vitiosity, become accommodate

instruments for the operations of the Soul, her vital union with matter continues, which in Death (say they) is totally lost and dissolved; and how the Soul unbared from all commerce with matter can be capable of acting, seems utterly unintelligible: Whether therefore the Soul does, or does not act without the help of matter, when her garments of mortality are laid aside, is not my present purpose to discuss: Only I shall cast in this by the way, that no man can be demonstratively certain that the soul cannot act without the assistance of matter, but if he remind himself of that intimate dependance the Soul hath upon matter in this life even in her sublimest exercises, (for I omit here the power of moving the body, which is likewise performed by the motion of matter directed according to the will and pleasure of the Soul) as also her sympathy with the mutations and alterations of the Air, whereby the mind becomes more elevate and serene, or cloudy and dull, and those infinite varieties likewise which a man may observe in his own temper and constitution, not to instance in any other but those of an extraordinary joy and

and cheerfulness of spirit at sometimes, and at others as great a pensiveness and melancholy, of which a man can give no account or reason from any external cause, but only from the purified and more subtle, or fulsome and gross steams ascending into the brain; and withall consider that the great Crown of our Faith and Patience, the happiness and reward of glorified Spirits, to purchase which for mankind the ever blessed Son of God left the sacred mansions of Heaven, the bosome of blessedness, and veiled his glory under the clouds of flesh and blood, shall be an ethereall and heavenly body, which *Plato* calls *αυγαστικὸν ὄχημα* a *resplendent vehicle*, and *St. Paul* *σῶμα πνευματικόν* a *spiritual body*: he, I say that attentively perpend this, that the instruments of the Souls operations both in this life and the next are corporeal, will likewise think it probable, that she is not wholly denudated of Matter in the intermediate space between death and the resurrection, at what time she shall be possessed of her long expected joy, and her vile body shall be transformed into the similitude of the glorious body of the Son of God

God. Supposing then the Soul vitally united with matter after death, she will both act, and also be capable of pleasure or pain, which are the unavoidable concomitants of her transactions in this life: For, can we imagine that God will put a stop to the course of Nature, and alter that order and constitution of things which bears upon it the signature and Image of his eternal Wisdome? Surely, it cannot be that he should frustrate the hopes and expectations of men, when all things so favourably conspire to give them an energetical and vital reception into the other World. And if God do not drench the Souls of men in this lake of oblivion and soporiferousness (which we have all the reason in the world to believe, and ought to be confident that he will not) they will infallibly be instated, upon their dereliction of their earthly bodies, into a condition of happiness or misery, which will altogether take away that fanciful dream of their sleep till the great day of judgment. For, although here the voice of Conscience may be drowned by the clamours of Sense, and those many Diversions arising from the present state

state of affairs in this life; yet, when death
 shall draw aside the curtain of mortality;
 and those various objects, which so often
 presented themselves to our view, pass
 away like a shadow, leaving nothing to
 the Soul but the vast prospect of an e-
 ternal Tragedy; the conscience will then
 awake, and pierce her with an extraor-
 dinary resentment and vexation: For,
 besides that the Soul shall see all her wic-
 ked attempts and designs blasted upon
 Earth, the memory of her name cursed
 and detested, and become thoroughly ap-
 prehensive of the miscarriage and iniqui-
 ty of her past life, and have a full and clear
 sight of all her impious actions, stript of
 their painted gloss and varnish, & in their
 proper colours and genuine circumstan-
 ces; besides this, I say, the Fame of her
 unrighteous demeanour will go before
 her into the other World, and quickly
 be disspread over the secret regions and
 receptacles of Spirits, by those vigilant
 spectators, who take cognizance and
 give intelligence of humane affairs:
 which cannot but afflict her even unto
 death, to see her self abandon'd both of
 good Angels, and the spirits of just and
 holy men, and confined to the society
 of degenerate Fiends and Dæmons
 reserved

reserved to the judgment of the great Day. And these fiery stings and griplings of conscience shall rage perpetually, and, if we can imagine any intermission, it will be but like the sleeps of the wind in a storm, or the broken sighs of a tempest, to recover its exhausted spirits, and return with a greater impetuosity and fury. But to take a view of those good and holy persons whom the Father of spirits has called out of this present life, who yet are in as small a probability of being overtaken by this long night as the other, there wants not sufficient employment to keep them vigilant and active: For, whether it be that they delight in converse and society, they will find those immense tracts of space, not empty deserts and wildernesses, but replenished with diverse sorts of Beings, some equal to, others more noble than themselves, who all studiously endeavour to promote and carry on that great and general design of the diffusion of the Life and Nature of God over the whole Creation; they may there likewise meet with many of their departed Friends and Relatives, with whom they may again renew their antient leagues of friendship, and
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entertain an amicable correspondence and familiarity : or, whether they be contemplative, and affect a solitary retiredness and recess from the rest of the World, they may there call to mind their almost obliterate Speculations, and please themselves in the exertions of the innate Idea's and notions of their minds, and raise within them a high sense of joy and delectation in finding out many choise Theorems of Nature and Providence ; besides many other advantages which are not allowed or permitted to this state : So that, there is no fear the Soul should sleep or cease from acting, when loosened from this earthly body.

The resurrection of the Sonne of Argum. 2.
 God from the dead is so palpable a pledge of the Soul's living and acting after death, that he must commit a rape upon his faculties, and do violence to all his intellectual powers who will not be convinced by it. For, that he should by wicked hands be bereaved of his innocent life, and so thoroughly slain that his malicious enemies the Jews never question his death, and, which further confirms the truth of it, lye three dayes buried in the
 grave,

grave, and afterwarde rise again and exercise the proper functions of a living man, and that not for some small and inconsiderable time, but conversing forty dayes with his Disciples upon Earth to take away all cause and suspicion of delusion, and then ascend in the sight and presence of his Disciples and Friends to the comprehensions of that Glory which not long before his death he prayed to his Father to glorify him withall; this, I say, is a full and convictive Demonstration even to outward sense that that dull and lethargick stupour shall never take away sense and action from our Souls when they depart from their living graves and monuments of flesh and blood. And as it was with him, so shall it be with us, in our order, measure, and proportion; Christ our head lives, and is seated at the right hand of God in the highest glory and felicity, (for he there makes intercession for his Church;) and because he lives, we his members shall live also. He is a *living Vine*, and all the members of his mystical body are *living branches* not only in a moral but natural and physical sense

sense : For, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: πάντες αὐτῷ ζῶντες, for all live unto him. Now if the Souls of men fall into so permanent a sleep, they are dead, or rather annihilated, (for, not to be, and not to be conscious of ones Being, are much one) and their recuperation to life is to them as it were a new Creation ; neither know they why they are rewarded or punished, because Death and that Narcotick state which immediately follows it (according to this extravagant Dream) washes away the memory of all past actions whatsoever. To this we may adde the Apparition of *Moses*, and *Elias*, in their Celestial robes to our blessed Saviour at his Transfiguration upon Mount *Tabor*, when his Face shone like the Sun, and his rayment became pure and white as the light; and those two divine Personages foretold the good events of his Death, and spake words of comfort to him under the consideration of his inglorious and humble Passion; which is an evident proof that the Souls of *Moses* and *Elias* did not sleep when they left their Bodies, but that they
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now live and act in the felicities of Jesus, to whom in the dayes of his flesh they brought relief and solace. And if it were otherwise, I do not see how the Apostles affections could be carried out in so vehement and longing a desire to be freed from this Earthly body (for so σκηνῶν *i. e. Tabernacle*, signifies, and is used *Wisd. 9. 15.* and by *Pythagoras* in *Hermippus*) and to be possessed of that Building of God, which he calls likewise οἰκητήριον τὸ ἐξ οὐρανό, *a house which is from heaven*, that is, a heavenly body, (for οἰκοδομή is the same with σκηνός, & both answer to the Hebrew *מִשְׁכָּן*; and so *St. Chrysostome* understands it, where, to the Apostle's τὸ οἰκητήριον ἡμῶν he thus speaks, πῶς οἰκητήριον; εἰπέ μοι, τὸ σῶμα τὸ ἄφθαρτον. that is, *what house? tell me: An incorruptible Body*: To this sense *Gorgias Leontinus* in *Stobæus* uses the word οἰκίδιον, when he calls our earthly body σκωπρὸν καὶ πῶς οἰκίδιον, *a putrid and decaying Tenement*:) for if he enjoyed nothing of this great Reward till the Resurrection, but upon his dissolution from the body were deprived of all Sense of his Being, it would be far more desirable for him, and all other Christians

Christians to continue still in this World, then to groan to be delivered from the burden and encumbrances of the flesh, only to fall into a state of inactivity and silence, being neither conscious of themselves nor of any thing in the external Creation. What Christ once said to his Disciples, may very accommodately be applyed to this present Case, *In my Fathers house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you.* And surely if the Souls of men after death fall into such a dead and heartless condition, as not to know they are in Being, the infinite goodness and veracity of almighty God so wonderfully displayed to the World in the Son of his love, would never have deceived the hopes and expectations of the wisest and best Persons even to this present age, but timely have corrected and prevented so Universal an error, especially in so weighty a Concernment as this, wherein the manner of their reception into the other World differs so widely from the Schemes and representations they drew of it in this. Nay, if it be an error, the Veracity of God is deeply

deeply engaged to discover it; because the greatest Prop which upholds and maintains its credit amongst men is founded upon the most holy revelations of his will.

Before I descend to the second Demand, give me leave to insert these two Paragraphs.

1. That Sensuality is the great Patronesse of this heartless and dull fancy, of the Soul's Sleep after death.

2. That when the Intellectual man is refined by purity and holiness, it will lift up the Soul far above these panick fears.

It was the love of Sense and corporeal pleasures, that first sunk us from our happiness, and drew the Sable Mantle of death over the comely pourtrayture of Gods Image in our Souls; and it is this which still degrades us, and makes us unlike our Maker: This outward World is that *μίσγας* *γὰρ* the Great Magician or Enchanter (as the Platonick Philosopher calls it) which with its Syren Musick bewitches and allures the Mind from the still and quiet contemplation of the beauties
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and pulchritude of the moral and intellectual World ; for all those charming complacencies and exterior phantasms with which the Soul is so ravished and captivated, are nothing but so many emissions and radiations of the external World, variously striking upon and moving the Senses or bodily life ; so that the declining Soul according to the diversity of its degeneracy becomes more or less disspread and incorporated with the outward World : *ἐπεὶ γὰρ τὰ αἰσθητὰ κίνησις, καὶ τὰ νοητὰ ἀπόστασις*, (as *Porphyry* speaks) *where the motions of Sense are predominant, there is a recession from Intellect*. There is in every man an Animal and an Intellectual Nature, the one respects τὰ αἰσθητὰ sensible objects, the other τὰ νοητὰ intellectual and things abstracted from Sense : Now the more we check and controul the Luxuriancy of the Animal or bodily life, the more refined and vegete are those higher powers of the Soul, in the exercise of which consists her true life. For, what more besorts the perceptive faculties of a man, than those grosser pleasures of the Sensitive life? And who Philosophize more grossly concern-
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ing the future state of the Soul, than those who make it the greatest part of their happiness to enjoy to the full whatsoever pleasure their degenerate wills and lusts shall suggest unto them? But he that by a wise and timely management of those powers the provident care and goodness of God hath vouchsafed to him, hath so gallantly maintained the Nobility and heavenly Nature of his Soul, that he soars above terrene vanities, disdaining to mingle with the unsatisfactory pleasures of the corporeal World, and by a due and severe castigation hath brought low that exorbitant principle by which he is connected to this Earthly body; he hath subtiliz'd his mind and is united to that Omnipresent and alcomprehensive Intellect, and foresees his reception into the other life, and presages that happy and blessed state he shall then enter upon, when the links and cords of mortality shall be broken or worn asunder: Such a one, I say, is confident that it shall go well with him, when he hath finished the last Act of life upon Earth, and that if there be any Being more excellent than Mat-
ter

ter, any Providence ruling and pre-
 siding over the affairs of the world;
 he shall not then slide out of Being
 nor cease to Act, when he *goes hence*
and is no more seen. These Speculati-
 ons therefore require a due preparati-
 on of mind. And every man cannot
 be convinced by them; because few
 are in a fit capacity and disposition for
 the entertainment of them. Τὸ ὅμοιον τῷ
 ὁμοίῳ γινώσκοντες, *Like is known by its like:*
 and if the inward sense and touch of
 mens spirits be adapted only to the re-
 lish and gust of the Bodily Life, the
 suggestions of the Intellectual Nature
 will be like the sudden immission of
 light upon sore eyes, burdensome and
 offensive; and the man is no more ca-
 pable of the force and power of such
 argumentations, than a Swine of Mo-
 rality, or the savage Tygers of Inge-
 nuity and Goodness.

I come now to your second Question,
 which is, *whether upon the quitting this*
Body, the Soul be immediately carried,
either to Heaven or Hell? The Holy
 Scriptures, which give us all imaginable
 certainty of a blessed reward of our
 Faith and Patience, at the Great Day of
 Recompences, when God shall have

put all his enemies under his feet; are very silent in delineating and depicting out to us, the state and condition of the Soul between Death and the Resurrection. Yet this we are assured of in general, That the Souls of Good and Holy Men, are alwaies under the careful eye of Heaven, and live in joy and felicity, farr above the troubles and discontents that attend this obscure and evanid life they lead on Earth: and on the contrary, That shame and misery await the refractory and irreclaimable spirits of Impious persons, upon their separation from their terrestrial bodies. But, whether the one be in Heaven, properly so called, and partake of those great diffusions of Glory, which shall be conferred on the children of the Resurrection; and the other in Hell, that is, in that place of torment *prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, or into which Death and the Grave shall be cast, when time shall be no more, immediately upon their disunion from their Bodies; the Sacred Writ hath no-where determined. He therefore, who will seek further, may indeed light upon some probable Conjectures, which may bear the visage and

and phisnomy of truth, but can never positively assert them as convictive and indubitable. The only remain in Speculations of this Nature, is, To decide them by free and unprejudiced Reason and Philosophy: and if by that light and conduct, the mind of man fall upon any conclusion consentient with the Attributes of God, or those eternal and immutable laws, implanted and wrought in the essential frame of the Creation; though I do not say, it is impossible for him then to erre, yet his miscarriage will be exceeding pardonable, pleasant, and ingenuous. I confess, the world hath been long contented to live in an easie and affected ignorance; and men, either out of a deplorable proclivity to vice and impiety, or from a stupid and blockish zeal to Religion, willingly profess, that all things are uncertain, and sit down in this, that we can know nothing; as if the wise and benign Author of our Beings had made the very essential principles of our Natures, fallacious; and that we should then be most of all deceived, when we think we have the clearest apprehensions, and most di-

strict Idea's of the things we converse about. Reason is the Image of God in the Soul of Man, and, when assisted by the Divine Wisdom, is the only ~~reason~~ to discriminate between truth and falsehood: And though it be true, that an honest and sincere heart be dear and precious in the eyes of God, and sufficient to instate a man in that happiness which attends the faithful adherents of the Kingdom of Light; yet he that employes his faculties in searching out such considerable truths in Nature and Providence, as may benefit the world, and do good to the generations of men, ennobles his Soul, and widens it for the reception of some greater good and influence, from that inexhaustible Fountain which gave life and being to the whole frame of Nature. But I fear my Pen has been too luxuriant in pleading for the free use of Natural Reason, and I have need of your pardon, and shall make amends, by falling immediately upon the Question in hand. I say therefore, So far as the Light of Nature is able to judge, the Soul doth not immediately go to Heaven or Hell in their strict significations, upon its

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separation from the body ; but that there is some middle State of Being between Death and the Resurrection. And that you may not think I rake in the ashes of the Church of *Rome*, and seek to revive and blow up that ridiculous Doctrine of *Purgatory* ; I shall crave leave to tell you, that by this middle State I mean no such condition of Being, as that wherein a man from his impious transactions in this life, shall undergo very sharp and acute torments, the protraction or abbreviation of which yet, depend upon the will and pleasure of his Holiness and mercenary Priests ; and after such a time of penance and purgation, be delivered, and translated into Heaven : but, such a state, wherein, by a due purification of their minds, and subjugation of those stubborn lusts and desires which exalt themselves against the life of God, and which were not thoroughly tamed in this life, the Soul of man becomes wholly dead to every inordinate affection, and daily kindles that fire of Divine Love, till at last it arise to a perfect flame, and triumphantly carry up the duly prepared soul, like *Elijah* in his fiery chariot,

riot, to the beatifical vision and enjoyment of God.

Argum. 1.

And this is no more than what Reason it self assures us of; For, he that shall consider, that the operations of the Spirit of God upon mens hearts, and their progress in Holiness and Virtue, are wrought successively by parts, and distant proportions; and that a man is not a Saint in an instant, or by the Piety and Religion of a day; but attains and reaches to that glorious Crown by patient continuance in well doing, and that by sharp and unwearyed conflicts with Lust and Sin, by habitual and persevering acts of Virtue, and an undaunted Resolution, he must demonstrate himself a true and faithful disciple and souldier of the Son of God: must necessarily conclude, either that the infinitely far greater part of men are damned, yea, those who have had very small, and few opportunities of doing good to themselves or others in this life; or else that there is a time and place of bettering themselves, and where that benign Spirit, who expressed his dear compassion in hovering over the new born world, will be as ready to help for-

forward the tender inchoations of the life of God, and perpetually raise and lift up those fettered souls into the true liberty of the sons of Heaven and Immortality. As the efformations of the spirit of Nature out of fully prepared Matter, are not instantaneous, but gradually arrive to their perfection and maturity; So are the operations of that Universal Spirit of Love and Goodness upon the hearts of men, where ever he meets with fit and kindly dispositions and capacities. And surely no man can, without blasphemy, think that God ever was, or will, at any time or place, be wanting to the faithful endeavours and attempts of sincere persons, after the participation of his own Image, and the renovation of their minds and spirits into that divine frame and temper, which is dearer to God than any thing in the world. Nay, he can never do it; for it is as possible for the Sun to withhold his beams from shining upon the earth, and leave the disconsolate world to an eternal night of sorrow and darkness, as for God, the Sun of Heaven, to be divided from that which is his own life, and suspend his kindly influence from the tender

productions of his Nature. I can sooner believe, that darkness should desert it's black and pitchy caverns, and sport with light and the day; or that the Elements should change their natures, and the Frame and beauteous order of things be tumbled into an eternal confusion; as once to entertain a thought that God should be unkind, and severe to the pious breathings of an innocent and harmless Soul. There being therefore in the world so many truly Religious persons, who affectionately pant and aspire after a greater communication of the life of God, and yet are denied those opportunities of perfecting their minds, which others enjoy, by reason of that place and station assigned them, by the wise, and unerring Providence of God, in this transitory life; there being likewise so great a part of the world lying yet under a squallid barbarity, wholly oppressed and loaden with the ruins of their broken Natures, whom yet the Son of God thought not unworthy his care and love: surely it would be a great eye-sore and blemish in Heavens righteous Oeconomy and dispensation in the World, if there were really no time
or

or means allowed for the recovery of these lapsed Souls: whose condition, though it be very sad and calamitous, yet it is not desperate, nor are they sunk below the compassions of their Maker, but still lye under a benign aspect: and though the Sun of Righteousness seem to set in a cloud, and leave their Hemisphere to a night of darkness; yet there is hopes that there will come a time (if it be not already) wherein he will rise again with healing in his wings, and visit the desolate and dejected regions of the world, with his chearing heat and vigour, and their entangled pinions be again set loose, and their plumes freely disspread in the open and boundless tracts of Immortality and Joy. It is not the will and pleasure of God that any innocent person should perish; and therefore we may conclude, that there is some time and place, where the young and tender efformations of God's holy life, in the more harmless Pagans, and such who lived in the dark and ignorant age of the world, shall be brought to their due measure of maturity and perfection: For, to think they are damned,
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is not suitable to that everlasting Goodness which is the source and root of the Divine Perfections; And that they are not immediately translated into Heaven, properly so called, will appear from the Oeconomy of Providence in the world, and the Nature of the thing it self.

Arg. 2.

As an Appendix to this, we may add, That Heaven is rather a State than a Place, and consists in the frame and temperament of a mans mind and spirit; and if we could imagine a degenerate and sinful person taken up into Heaven, unless God did likewise miraculously change and alter the present temper and disposition of his mind, it would be a pain and affliction to him, and he would be no more capable of dwelling in that glorious brightness, than Owls and Night-birds to face the Sun, and steadily behold that amazing lustre. When the benign Creator of all things produced the glorious Fabrick of Heaven and Earth, and replenished all the empty regions of the World, and the vast capacities of immense Space, with diverse sorts and degrees of Beings; he so wisely ordered

ed and disposed every thing, that nothing should act beyond it's sphere, but proportionately to those powers and faculties it became invested with; for so the order and frame of the world required. Thus, the beasts of the field cannot live perpetually in the water, nor fish in the air, because the vital congruities of the one are adapted to the gross and more compacted body of the Earth, the other to the fluid and yielding Element of the Water. The Angels, which are an Order of Spirits above the rank of Humane Souls, cannot actuate and inform a terrestrial body; nor can man, in his earthly state, become an inhabitant of the thinner tracts and regions of purest *Aether*. When therefore in the beginning God created Mankind, foreseeing that they would not always continue in the immortal mansions of Paradise, but eat and dye, and instruct themselves, by unhappy experiments, in the frail and imperfect state of this lower World; he fitted them with such vital powers and congruities, as might capacitate them for action, that so the revolutions of the wheel of Providence

(though

(though wide, and seemingly intricate and perplex) may at last appear equal and unerring. There being then a peculiar Crasis or congruity required to inform that heavenly Body, which shall be the reward of departed Saints at the Day of God, (and that not to be awakened but by a long and regular depuration of the Mind, and perfect submission and resignation to the will of God;) we cannot rationally imagine, that any one should pass immediately from the Body, to those regions of Light and Glory, before this Divine Principle be sufficiently invigorated, and the others perfectly laid asleep. And to think that God will immediately call forth into act this *Æthereal* congruity of life in the soul of every pious Man, departed this life, is to set the miraculous power of God at a very cheap and easie rate. Besides that, it despoils the Nature of the Creature, and renders useless and ineffectual such Faculties as, without this supernatural check and controul, would, in their due time, awake, for the orderly accomplishment of that, to whose production we entitle the immediate operation

tion of the Divinity. Nor doth it less
 entrench upon the Wisdom of God,
 by drawing such a Scheme of things,
 wherein God must continually unbare
 his arm, and upon every occasion exert
 his eternal power for the effecting of
 that, which would certainly arise in
 it's order and proportion, by the at-
 tempts and operations of rational
 agents, accompanied with the con-
 currence and assistance of divine
 grace and benediction. For so we see
 that God works in men now; and
 we may as well think that God should
 take every man immediately into hea-
 ven upon his first embracing the Go-
 spel, and by his infinite power make
 him a perfect Saint, as that he should
 do the same for them upon their death-
 beds, or upon their disunion from
 their bodies. Farr be it from us to
 entitle such precarious, and unaccoun-
 table actions to the Deity; but rather
 believe, that the constancy and immu-
 tability of his Nature is such, that he
 alwayes works orderly, and according
 to those Laws and Rules he hath placed
 in the World, unless a visible and
 certain good of a part, or the whole
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Creation intervene, and cannot so advantageously be effected by the ordinary course of Natural Agents. And now let us consider how very few there are that have arrived to such eminent degrees and measures of virtue, as to be capable of this exalted state of mind; and what multitudes of sincere and hearty lovers of truth and righteousness are snatcht away by the rude arms of death, before the luxuriant branches of the Animal or Brutish life are taken wholly away; and Reason will extort this confession from us, that there must be a time of purgation in some state on this side Heaven, wherein the infant productions of the Divine Nature may arise to their full maturity and perfection. For, it cannot consist with that eternall Goodness which is the rule and measure of all the actions of the Deity, to send the greatest part of Mankind into the World, there to lead a frail and miserable, and, at best, but a short life, subject to infinite casualties and imperfections, and (which yet blemishes Heaven's righteous Oeconomy) having but very few,

few, and those weak means and insectual helps, as to the recovering the broken and decayed Image of God in their Souls, for the want of which notwithstanding they shall be thrown into everlasting misery: I say, it cannot consist with the Benignity and Goodness of God, to deal thus with his Creatures: Wherefore, if we will not admit of this, we must seek out some other *Hypothesis*, to save up those flaws and defects which otherwise will appear in the beautiful Order and ministration of Providence.

Not to omit any thing which might give light to the present Question, I shall consider the use of those terms and expressions in Holy Scripture, which by many are extended and drawn to the contrary Sense; and me-thinks from thence some few glimmerings ray forth, on purpose, as it were, to allure the lovers of knowledge to a diligent search and inquiry after it. *In my Fathers house* (sayes the Son of God) *are many mansions: but I go to prepare a place for you.* The whole world is the house
of

of the great King, and in it are many Outer-Courts and different Places, both higher and lower Rooms, fitted for the several capacities and states of all his Servants; and yet, there was a place whither all holy Souls shall arrive, and which was not then ready. From whence 'tis plain, that the Souls of the Patriarchs, and holy men, which lived before the Coming of the *Messias*, were not entred into the *Cælum Beatorum*, that is, into Heaven, properly so called; but were in a state of joy and happiness, (which the Greek Fathers call *ἡνείκετος τῷ παρδείσῳ*; and *παράδεισος*, as *Luk. 16*, and the Latin, *Refrigerium* and *Somnum pacis*) where they conversed with God, as the Prophets did in their Dreams, in which they received great degrees of favour and revelation, and were refreshed with the frequent visits and society of Angells, till they arose to their eternal State. And this is the Receptacle of all good men, in whom the fire of Divine Love is not so enflamed and kindled, as to melt their less pure bodies into a Celestial splendor. And to this records that speech of Christ to the

the penitent thief; *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, that is, in the joyes and felicities of pious Souls; for ~~magister~~ is by the *Greeks*, and *Philo*, called the Garden where *Adam* was placed: And hence, when the felicities of a future life began to be discovered more clearly, the state of holy Souls expecting the resurrection of the dead, was called by the Jews *garden*. The reason of which was, (as *Grotius* in *Luk. 23.* conjectures) because of the analogy between them; that, as the Garden of Paradise, in which *Adam* was in his state of innocency, abounded with pleasures and delights; so doth this receptacle of pious and devout souls after death. And hence it was that *St. Paul* in *2 Cor. 12. 2. 4.* was first shewn the joyes of the children of the Resurrection; and, least his resolute and active Soul should be troubled with the long expectation of such ineffable felicity, the comforts and refreshments of Paradise, and antepasts of Heaven, were likewise discovered to him. Which were denoted to the sons of sense under the notion and figure of a Garden, because they could not conceive *in sensu nisi sub*

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figura

figura τῶν διανοητῶν, intellectual things, but under a sensible Scheme. And to this are opposed γήνηα, and πύρρῃ, which signify the state and condition of such irreclamable spirits as are sunk below all the principles of Righteousness and justice, and make it their whole design to obliterate those Idea's out of their minds. Now, as Paradise and Hell signify the distinct condition of good and bad Spirits, so ("Αδης) *Hades* denotes the common receptacle of them all, and is opposed both to this Life, and the Resurrection; and answers to the Hebrew *האש*, as *Gen. 37. 35.* *אמר אל-בנימין שאלה בן אדר "אני אקרא בשם אלהי אברהם ויש לי בן אחד ואתה תבכה עליו ואתה תקבורו עי"י אלהיך" ואתה תבכה עליו ואתה תקבורו עי"י אלהיך* *πρὸς τὸν υἱόν μου πνέων εἰς "αδης; for I will go down into the grave unto my son, mourning; which could not be meant of the Grave, as if his son had been buried, (for he supposed him to be torn in pieces by wild beasts) but of the region or state of Invisibleness; for so Hades properly signifies: Thus Heraclitus, π. ἀπὸς. speaking of the Helmet of Hades which makes men invisible, he says, It is τὸ τέλος, the end, or death of every man; εἰς δ' ἀπείρητον πλεονεκτησὶς ἀόρατον γίνεται, to which he that comes, becomes invisible. It is more than*

than probable therefore, that Paradise signifies no other, but, according to the Jewish notion, a place of delight and pleasure, appropriated to the Spirits of just men; such as the Poets understood by their Elizian fields, which *Pindar, Olym. Od. 2.* as he is cited by *Eugubinus*, in his book *de perenni Philosophia*, excellently well describes;

Τοῖσι λάμπει μὲν μίϞ ηἰλίε
 Τὰν ὠκυδὲς ὑκτα κέτω,
 Φοινοκορυδαίλει λειμῶνις εἰσὶ περὶ ἄριστον αὐτῶν,
 Καὶ λιβάνη σκυρᾷ, καὶ χρυσόκρηπτοις βίβραθι.
 Καὶ τοὶ μὲν ἵπποις, γυμνασίῳ, τοὶ δὲ πλοῖσι,
 Τοὶ δὲ φορμύγῃσι τέρψονται.
 Παρὰ δὲ σφίσι νηυσὶν ἄπας τίθηται ὄλβος,
 Ὅδ' ἔστιν ἱερῶν καὶ χῶρον κίδναται αἶψα.
 Θύμῳ μὲν μιν γένεται πρὸς τῆς φάνης
 Παντοία, θεῶν ἱπὶ βώμοις.

These
 verses not
 extant in
 our vulgat
 books.

For, that our Saviour by Paradise did not understand those æthereal Regions of blis and joy, which are the portion and inheritance of defecate and sublime Spirits, will be evident; in that he himself was not there, but, in the intermediate space between his Death and Resurrection, preached, *πρὸς τοὺς ἐν φυλακῇ, to the spirits in prison,*

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that

that is, to those who in the dayes of *Noah* were drowned in that general Deluge, and now were released, and set at liberty by the approach of the Son of God ; such as the Prophet *Zach.* 9. 11, 12. calls *Prisoners of hope, lying in the lake where there is no water* ; that is, where there was no constant stream of joy to refresh their present condition, but yet they were supported with certain showers and gracious visitations from God, and illuminations of their hope. That of *St. Paul*, *Phil.* 1. 23. makes little to their purpose, who think the Soul goes presently to Heaven, upon the dissolution of the body ; for, *To be with Christ*, signifies no more, than that our Souls are received by Christ, into merciful, joyful, and safe custody, as dear pledges* committed to his trust and care, till *Hades* shall deliver up it's dead ; and then we, who before were *ἀφανείς, invisible*, shall come forth, and be presented to the view of the World, and receive that great *βεγέτις*, and Crown of Righteousness, which Christ has laid up for *St. Paul*, and you, and me, and all that long for his

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* *Act* 7. 59
2 Tim.
 1. 12.

appearance. The sum of all is this, that it cannot be made good, either from Scripture or Reason, that the Souls of men departed this life, go immediately upon their separation, to Heaven or Hell, in a Scholastical sense: For this we have the suffrage of *Justin Martyr*, who disputing with *Trypho* the Jew, taxes those as erroneous, who say, *μη ειναι νεκρων ανάστασιν, ἀλλ' ἅμα τῇ ἀποθνήσκειν τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτῶν ἀναλαμβάνεσθαι εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν.*

Your third Demand carries with it more difficulty; and while I discourse of it, I am wholly in the dark, and can only give you a Conjectural Essay: which, if it may be subservient to my purpose, that is, please, and gratify your fancy, and, like the little dots or characters in Brachygraphy, bring to your mind a more copious illustration of the present Theme, I shall obtain my desire.

I consider therefore, the whole World, under God the great Monarch of the Creation, (so many, I mean, as partake of Reason and Intellect) to fall under a Political Government; and it seems altogether necessary, that

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among

among the aerial Inhabitants it should be so ; for they being a mixed, and heterogeneous number , of good and bad, if there were not a due execution of those Eternal and Sacred Laws enacted by the Counsel of Heaven, for the promoting and establishing Piety and Virtue, and the everting and eradicating Vice and Impiety, the condition of all good and holy men would be unspeakably grievous and miserable ; there being so many degenerate Spirits, who are only awake to the life of the Body , and being wholly dead to all sense of Pity and Compassion, please themselves in wreaking the rage of their furious and exorbitant Lusts upon the Innocent and Virtuous: whose calamity must needs be Eternal, should not that just *Nemesi*s, which pervades the essential textures and inmost capacities of the whole Creation, erect a Polity and Kingdom of Light , to preside over, and curb the lawless actions of the dark Associates. And as the Condition and state of separate Souls is in a manner quite different from ours, so their Laws and Mulcts are diverse, and are best

best known to those that live under them : But whatever they are, 'tis most certain, their Penalties are severely executed upon offenders. And, for the due effecting of this, and conserving the peace and quiet of this great Empire of Intellectual Agents, there are ~~A~~ethereal Princes set over the several Kingdomes of the World; and, in subordination to them, are, the Governours, or tutelary Angels of Provinces, and little Exarchats; and last of all, every mans particular Genius, or guardian Angel: so that this Government reaches even from Heaven to Earth, and none can, through subtilty or power, free themselves from it. Considering therefore, The blew Arch, or Concave of Heaven, is so full of eyes, and careful Inspectors of the several actions and demeanours of separate Spirits, and their punishments so sharp and heavy, 'tis not to be thought that they will easily be induced to violate any of their Laws, (of which, perchance this may be one, of concealing their state from us Mortals) unless some one begg a Patent or dispensation, to satisfie the importunity

of a reliſt Friend, or diſcharge the obligation of an Oath. And this may be one reaſon why we hear ſo little news from the aerial Regions.

Another great Cauſe of their ſo ſeldom appearing to us, may be the difficulty and uneaſineſs of increaſſating their Vehicles; Thus have I ſeen, of twenty boyes, bathing and waſhing in the ſtreams, ſcarce one delight in diving to the bottom; and if perchance he do, his ſtay is ſo ſmall and in- conſiderable, that, had he been ſent on Embaſſie to the Fiſhes, the time would ſcarce permit him to have Audience, before he were conſtrained to diſappear. And I am the more confirmed in this perſwaſion, from thoſe aſſiduous Apparitions of Spirits among the *Laplanders*, whoſe Air being groſs and clammy, 'tis no hard matter for a *Demon* to condense it to viſibility; and from hence it was, that thoſe people uſed to interr their deceased Friends under their hearths, that ſo the warmth and heat of the fire, accelerating the putrefaction of their bodies, and rarefying the Craſie conſiſtency of the Air, might prohibit their other.

otherwise more frequent Visits. And he that shall recollect some, of those many stories of Phantasms, and the Apparitions of Spirits, which every age supplies us with; and take notice of those artifices and wayes, which, in all probability, they make use of, when they intend to shew themselves to the frail eyes of men: he cannot but conclude it to be a pain and affliction, to constipate and hold together the gross particles, and glutinous suffusions of their Vehicles, for any considerable time. Hence it is, that those *Spectra* which infest the Earth, are generally maleficent *Demons*, whose spirital part, grown fat and dull, through a perpetual indulgence to their lower Faculties, like Swine, they take a great complacency in dabling and soaking their Vehicles in the miry, and caliginous tracts of the Air; and often become visible, by fermenting and agitating the stagnant blood of their despicable bodies they left behind them; and which the charity of men laid to rest in the Earth. And, by the way, this is the reason why sometimes the

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Spectra have never been seen or heard of, after the burning and consuming of their bodies, which furnished them with effectual instruments and provision for their gamesome or wicked attempts. But if this be not ready at hand, they descend into the nasty Caverns of the Earth, and attract to them the thickest fumes and exhalations; or else suck in the impure and fulsome steams arising from the blood of slain beasts, like the *zabii*, licking the blood of the *Egyptian* Sacrifices, which is, nor only a kind of Nutrient to their vehicles, but the most likely means to transform themselves into whatsoever visible shape they please. To this purpose is that of *Porphyrus*, *οὗτοι* (scil. *δαίμονες κακουργοὶ*) οἱ *χαίροντες* λαιβῇ κρέσσει, δι' ὧν αὐτῶν τὸ πνευματικὸν παίνεται· ἥ γὰρ τὸ αὐτοῖς καὶ ἀναθυμιάσει, καὶ ποικίλῃ ἀπὸ τῶν ποικίλων, καὶ συνάμνεται οἷς ἐκ τῶν αἱμάτων καὶ σαρκῶν κρέσσουσιν. And this, no doubt, is the reason why the Familiars, and Imps of Witches, make themselves a kind of Teat in some part or other of the bodies of their accursed Consorts, whereby they exhaust their blood and spirits, and render their visages for the most

Lib. 2.
περὶ ἀπο-
χρῆς ἐμφε-
ρων.
Sect. 42.

most part horrid and gasty, like themselves, when they appear to them. From the consideration of these evil *Genii*, we may proportionably guess at the state of those better Souls, who have nothing more to do upon the Earth, when they are once departed from it; or, if they appear again, it is upon a great necessity, and for a weighty occasion; and then they scorn and abhor those ignoble ways of making themselves objects of our Senses; and having effected their design, they are no more heard of, but rest in peace and quietness; chiefly aiming at the loosening and freeing themselves from their commerce with the impurer parts of matter. For, as the other do delight in incrassating, so these are continually intent upon attenuating their Vehicles, and awakening to life their æthereal congruity; which having attained, they become invisible to the Aereal Inhabitants. And, as when we traverse the hills, and suck in the purer gusts of air, we are more vivid and cheerful, and 'tis an affliction to stay in a thicker and unwholsome Region; so these purer Spirits, having
free

free access to the tops of mountains, and more serene Quarters of heaven, find themselves sensibly pained, when they descend into these lower tracts, and coagulate their looser bodies into a visible consistency.

To give some further light to the Physical consideration of this Argument, in reference to the Apparitions both of Good and Bad Spirits; it may be, it will require almost as deep a degree of Fancy, to constipate their aery Bodies to visibility, as it doth to attain to that ἀφαιρέσις, or separation and disjunction of the Soul from this terrestrial Body without Death, and then it is no wonder if so few appear to us: For, though the matter of their Vehicles may be very pliable, and easily formed into any shape, yet the efformation of it into this, or the other particular ἰδέα, depends not so much upon the will, or arbitrary power, as upon a very strong imagination, impressed upon, and reaching the plastick Faculty; and it seems to be no more in their power to condense their Bodies into visibility, than it is in ours, to rarifie our Blood into Steam

Steam and vapour. Their bodies therefore, naturally falling into humane shape, and retaining the characteristical personality they bare in this world, if at any time they constrain them to represent another effigies, or contract and constipate the laxe and diffuse particles of their Vehicles, so as to become sensible to us, it cannot be counted a spontaneous action, that is effected by an arbitrary power, but depends upon the strength of Imagination which, although it act more quick and perceptibly upon their tenuious bodies, yet all effects are not equally produced by the same degree of Fancy or Imagination: Thus the signature, or impression of a Cherry upon the *Fetus* in the womb, is more easily produced, than the transformation of all it's members, into those of a Cat or Dog. And, as it is storied of *Cardan*, that by use and custome he had so altered his body, that he could, when he pleased, fall into a perfect *αφαιρέσις*; so I deny not but some separate spirits, may, by practice, and the aid of the Spirit of Nature, which may not improbably be thought assistant at such Feats as these, without any great pain or trouble become visible.

Ha-

Having given you this brief account of the Question, I shall digress a little (if I may call it so) to another Speculation, not unlike the former, and that is, *Why Good Angels, and pure and defecate Souls, whose exalted State makes them no less lovers of Men, than when their radiant Goodness was clothed with Humanity, and dwelt among them; should nevertheless hide it, by their short, and seldome Converse with the World?* The great Cause of it therefore seems to lye in the general wickedness and impurity of mens lives, insomuch that wickedness has delug'd the World; and Impiety and Vice, like a mighty torrent, swept away the ruinous and broken remains of Virtue, and defaced the air and features of the Divine Image, so that Holiness looks like a strange and unknown thing, as if it were as much forsaken of God as despised of men. For surely, did a real Spirit of truth and righteousness prevail in the hearts of mankind, and were they inoffensive and harmless, as the Sons of God and virtue, laying aside all Envy, Pride, and Self-interest, and expelling the principles of the im-
pious

pious Nature, and becoming in all things conformable to the mind and temper of the Holy Jesus; there would be no such strangeness between Heaven and Earth, but the communications of the Divine and Terrestrial Nature would be more frequent; and the Holy Angels, and the departed Souls of Just Men, would descend upon Earth, and visit the World, and Men would be made one Polity with them; and to Dye would be no more than to walk out of a close Prison, into the free and unbounded Air. For, what else can there be that should impede, or put a stop to such happy entertainments, since their pretensions and designs on both parts are the same, that is, the carrying on the Divine Life in triumph, to its utmost completion and perfection, and the utter elevation of the Kingdome of Sia and Darkness? The Angels, though much more noble than we, yet are no narrow, and self-contracted Beings, sporting themselves in the circles of their own glory, in an utter oblivion, or abhorrence of the poor and calamitous condition of the Inhabitants of the

the Earth, but full of love and benignity, remembring them as those who were once invested with the same happiness themselves now enjoy; and therefore are careful Observators of them, and Promoters of their felicity; Nor can we imagine, that Death can, alienate the affections of pious and holy men departed this life, from their fellow mortals, or make them less compassionate and studious of their good and welfare; but rather increase, and fann their Love into Flames and gentle Ardors, and having more knowledge, and a greater resentment of their wants and necessities, become not uninterested Spectators, but earnest Abettors of their innocent and faithful attempts, in recovering their ancient glory. 'Tis to be hoped therefore, that the time will come, before the periods of this World are run out and unravell'd, that the Divine Life shall have a general conquest over the hearts and minds of men, and a Spirit of Love and Righteousness overspread the face of the Earth; and men shall be fully assured and convinced even to

out.

outward sense of the immortality of their Souls, and the joyes of a future life, by the frequent intercourse and converse of holy and benign Spirits with them in these regions of the Earth.

To resume and conclude my former argument : That the apparitions of separate Souls are rare and infrequent, proceeds from the causes above recited; but, that there have been some in all ages, serves to carry on that great design of Providence, in assuring men of the future subsistence of their Souls, and confronting that dull and sottish spirit of Atheism, which is gone abroad into the world; That there is something in us that looks beyond the periods of this fleeting life, and survives our ashes, and is capable of acting freely and nobly, when these carneous fabricks shall fall asunder, and be cramm'd into their narrow Urns. The Soul of man, while 'tis held captive in the shackles and fetters of flesh and blood, is but in a Sleep, or a longer Dream; and the expiration of this terrestrial period, which we call Death, is the expurgation, or awakening those
E nobler

nobler Faculties, to a sense of Divinity, and unmasking the intricate, and perplexed apprehensions of the mind, from error and falshood. And hence it was, that the *Indian Brackmans* *

* Eorum
sententi-
am sic ex-
primit no-
bis Stra-
bo, lib. 15.

Νομί-

ζειν μὲν γὰρ δὴ τὸν ὄντως
βίον, ὡς ἀνὰ μὲν κυομέ-
νων εἶναι τὸν δὲ γένεσιν,
γίνεσθαι εἰς τὸν ὄντως βίον γὰρ
τὸν ὀδωκίμενα τοῖς φιλοσ-
φίστασι. Vid. & infig-
nem de hac eorum
sententia locum, apud
Porphy. lib. 4. περὶ
ἀποχ. ἑμψ. Sect. 8.

firm'd, The life of man in
this World, to be like the
state of the *Fetus* in the
Womb; and Death, to be
the Birth to Life, truly so
called; to a Life of Hap-
piness in the Blest Re-
gions above, in the qui-
et Plains of Heaven,
the Seat of the Immortal

Ὀυλὸν πᾶν οἷ' ἔθι. Φασὶ γὰρ ἰδοὺ ἀσφαλὲς αἰετὶ
ἔμμεναι, ἕτ' ἀνέμοισι πηδῶσθαι, ἕτε ποτ' ὄμβρα
Δύεται, ἕτ' ἁλὶ ὑπὸ πύλαται, ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰθερῇ
Πύλαται ἀέθριον, λευκὴ δ' ἀναδιδρομὴν αἰγλή.

Cicili: where the winds never ruffle
up a cloud to intercept the light of
the Sun's brighter face, nor Snow or
Showers ever pass through; but an un-
disturbed calm and serenity of an Eter-
nal Day overspreads the utmost limits
of these Blissful Mansions.

Your last Question propounded, is,
con-

concerning the lawfulness of *Praying for the Dead*, and, *whether the mutual obligations of friendship cease, when they are removed from the ruinous fabricks of their Earthly Bodies?* And truly, me thinks, it is a Problem worthy your eximious and generous mind, which is not contented only to make use of all the instances and opportunities of doing good to mankind in this life, but your pious charity would likewise follow them into the next; and, if it might be, make them as happy as God at first created them. For (as I have often heard you discourse) it is a pain and affliction, great as the tearing and rending our bodily life, to a noble and free spirit, to persuade himself, that, when our Piety hath committed our dead Friend's body to the Earth, its common Parent, and besprinkled his Hearse with a Funeral tear, and, it may be, for some small time after, breathed out a fresh gale of Sighs upon the sight of a Picture, or any thing, which, with his last words, and dying groans, he recommended to us as his Memorial; that then he should be banished out of

our minds, and no more regarded, than if he had never lived in the world, or were now quite extinct, and put out of Being. I cannot therefore attribute this unconcernedness for the state and condition of departed Souls, to any thing else, but to that poverty and narrowness of spirit, which makes men look upon themselves as private, and particular Beings, sent into the world to promote and advance their self designs and little interests, in contradistinction to all the rest of mankind, forgetting that they are a part of Gods Creation, and members of that great Body Politick which reaches from Heaven to Earth, and is extended every way through the vast comprehensions of immense Space; and therefore, that all the Creatures ought to have a share in their love; and that the more perfect their Natures are, the more they ought to be widened and enlarged in Charity, and an universal Benignity towards all, especially towards mankind, in promoting, to their utmost power, the completion of their happiness. For, although men, when they go away hence, become

come invisible to us, and we are in part at loss, in reference to their affairs and concerns; yet nevertheless we are assured they are in Being, and members of that great Society, of which we our selves make a part; and therefore are not to be accounted such strangers to our thoughts and devotions: and if their Prayers can at all prevail, and be effectual in our behalf, I do not see why the Prayers and Oraisons of a Good and Holy Person upon Earth, may not enter the eares of Heaven, and derive a blessing upon them, supposing them to stand in need of those things he desires in their behalf. That separate Souls are not unmindful of us when they have left the prisons of Flesh and Blood, and inherit a new and stranger freedome, cannot easily be denied; unless we will say, that the more perfect they grow, the less charity and love they retain towards those who want those degrees of felicity they have arrived unto. 'Tis true, those holy Spirits which depart hence, are seated far above the reach of Envy or Passion; and the dead Wife is not troubled at the songs

sung at the next Bridal Feast, nor
 grieved to see another inherit the
 Joyes of her Husbands-bed; but
 yet they are not removed so farr,
 as to beget in them an utter obli-
 vion of those they have left behind:
 nor doth the augmentation of their
 Happiness, diminish their love to-
 wards us Mortals, who begin our
 lives with weeping, as a sure pre-
 sage of our future calamities; and the
 first tribute we pay to the light of the
 Sun, is to present him with a tear,
 and watry eyes. There is then with-
 out doubt a Relation continued still,
 which, not only the laws of their
 Friendship, but their own native good-
 nels, which disspreads it self every
 way, when freed from the contagion
 of Earthly Concrecions, will never
 suffer them to rescind: To this pur-
 pose, *Josephus* brings in *Abraham*
 thus bespeaking his son *Isaac*, before
 that fatall stroke design'd to let out
 that pure Soul into the Skies; μετ' ἐν-
 χυν δὲ καὶ ἰσχυρίας εὐαίωνα (τῷ Θεῷ) ψυχὴν τὴν ἐν
 προσδοξίᾳ καὶ παρ' αὐτῷ κατέχουσαν, ἵνα τί μοι εἰς
 ἐκδημίαν καὶ μετακίνησιν, διὸ καὶ σὺ μέγιστον ἀνατί-
 φεραι, τὸν Θεὸν ἀπὸ σαυτοῦ παρακλησάντα. And
 St.

St. *Ambrose* gave some things in charge to his dying brother *Satyrus*, that he should do for him in the other world. And as they present themselves before the Throne of Majesty in humble Petitions for us, so certainly something belongs to us to do for them; and we must, by all those wayes we can, preserve, and continue the memory of our dead Friends, and of all good men: which can no wayes be better done, than by desiring God, with hearty and constant Prayer, to call home his banished to him; that those *μῆλα καὶ σπένδα μυστικὰ Θεῶν*, those little particles, and shreds of Divinity, (as *Epicteus* calls the Souls of men) may be gathered up, and re-united to the first, and al-comprehensive Good; and when the periods of this world shall be expired, they may have a joyful Resurrection, and a perfect consummation of their Bliss, in the Immortal Regions of Glory and Felicity. Thus St. *Paul* prayed for *Onesiphorus*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 18. *The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day; who, 'tis probable,*

was at that time dead, because the Apostle salutes the house of *Onesiphorus*, and not *Onesiphorus* himself; who, doubtless, had he been alive, and part of his family, would have been named particularly in the first place, and not afterwards, distinct from his house. But I do not lay so much stress upon this: If there fore the dead are in a state and capacity of being bettered, (as I think I have sufficiently proved they are, by what I have said in answer to your second Question) they may likewise receive good and advantage by our Prayers. For, to think that the Soul of man is immediately snatched up into the highest bliss and happiness in Heaven, or depressed into the torments of Hell, is not only contrary to Reason, but repugnant to the sense of Antiquity, which unanimously determines a time, *τελειώσεως*, of *Pur- gation*, before she can be admitted into the society of the Spirits *δικαίων τελειωμένων*, of *just men made perfect*; and if our Prayers can be in any measure beneficial to men in this life, they may have the same effects and pur-
poses

poses upon them in the other. For, let any man that thinks otherwise consider, what he means by Heaven, and if he have any congruous, and rational apprehension and Idea of it, he must necessarily conclude it to be a state of the highest purity and holiness, and the farthest removed from the infectious pollution of Mortality, and dreggs of the Terrestrial Life, and then let him reflect upon the moral Natures and Dispositions of the greatest part of Mankind, when they leave this world, and see how many vitious habits and inclinations towards the complacencies and inordinate pleasures of sense remain unmortified, how stubborn and inflexible their wills are yet to sincere Goodness and Righteousness, and how vigorous the Animal and bodily Life is, notwithstanding the continual contradictions and oppositions of Reason, and higher principles; and how very few of those which are sincerely good and righteous, to their utmost powers, have brought themselves under the Divine Life, so as to awaken in them that high and comprehensive

prehensive principle of Life and Immortality: let him, I say, consider these things, and then tell me, whether he can rationally averr, That the Souls of men, immediately upon their solution from their bodies, are carried into those degrees of happiness which are competible only to Heroically good and Virtuous Spirits. Nor can this enervate the force of this Argumentation, to say, That all the sins which a good man is guilty of in this life, proceed from his union and conjunction with this terrestrial Body, which continually administers fuel to the flames of inordinate Passions and irregular Desires and Actions; and consequently, when he is freed from the strait and narrow Laws of Mortality, he will become necessarily Good; and it will be as impertinent to pray for his emendation, and perfection in Holiness, as when we see the Sun leaving our Hemisphere, to pray that he may rise, and enlighten the world again to morrow. For, besides the ridiculousness of supposing the Soul of man, immediately upon it's relinquishing the Body, to arise
to

to such prodigious degrees of Sancti-
 ry, and Wisdom, and Goodness,
 that she becomes an Angel, or Demi-
 god, or, I know not what transcen-
 dent Being, and so perfectly cleared,
 and purified from all spots and defile-
 ments contracted in this life; as that
 glorious Eye of Heaven, the Sun,
 cannot espie a blemish in her; besides
 this, I say, one may well question,
Whether the Soul of man will be so
 Necessarily, and Fatally Good, in the
 other state, as the Objection seems to
 infer; since that she is never out of the
 reach of danger, till she hath attained
 her heavenly Body, which Christ, the
 righteous Judge, shall bestow upon
 her at the general Resurrection; but
 is alwayes encompassed about with
 the same invisible enemies, which at-
 tended her in this life; (there being
 a mixture, and complexion of good
 and bad Spirits, as of Mankind upon
 Earth): nor can she be totally freed
 from the extravagant impulses, and
 motions of her body, though it be
 farr more passive, and yielding to
 those gentle impresses and strokes she
 layes upon it, to countermand it's luxu-
 riant

riant solicitations to Impurity and Vice : And, though we should grant her to be Heroically good, (which is all that can be desired) yet her own Will, the principle of her first Rebellion and Apostacy, still remains, and she can have no greater security of her non-retrogradation, and falling back again, then the Angels, or she her self enjoyed, before her unhappy lapse : so that even here, there is required a timely care and vigilancy ; and, if the most virtuous Person upon Earth, may stand in need of Good Mens Prayers, to be excited to this careful industry and inspection over his wayes, then may they likewise in the other world. The Similitude therefore is ill applyed, from the necessary, and inevitable laws of Matter and corporeal Motion, to the emergent and spontaneous effects of free Agents ; for, unless we will make those bright Suns of Immortality, the Souls of men . to be purely Mechanical Contrivances, and despoil them of all liberty and innate principles, whereby to guide, and determine their actions ; we cannot imagine, that their Apo-

Apogee's and Perigee's, the excess and diminution of their rayes, and beams of Righteousness, should be so fatal and determinate, as the Rising and Setting of the material Sun, which illuminates the World. But, lastly, If we are to pray for nothing, which we are certain will come to pass whether we pray or no; I do not see how any man can say those Petitions, in that most excellent Prayer our Blessed Lord himself hath taught us, wherein we desire, *God's Name to be hallowed, his Kingdom to come, and his Will to be done*; for all these things will certainly be effected and accomplished, although we never pray that they should: Or, what need we pray, as our Church enjoyns us, in her compleat, and exact Service and Office of Burial, that God would shortly accomplish the number of his Elect, and hasten his Kingdom? Will not such Prayers as these, according to this Rule, be wholly useles and insignificant? Did not Christ pray for his Apostles, in the dayes of his Flesh, whom yet he knew certainly to persevere, and continue faithful unto Death?

Death? But I need not multiply Instances in this case. He that will follow therefore the duct of Reason, which alone ought to be Judge in this case, where the Scriptures are silent, must necessarily subscribe to this, That those who go out of this Body with love and affection to Sin and Vice, must receive a punishment proportionable to the inequality and obliquity of their spirits; and be fatally carried to such places of the Universe, as are futable to the courtness of their tempers; and, so on the contrary, That Virtuous minds shall be rewarded with such degrees of Felicity, and take up their station in those Habitations which are most congruous and agreeable to their Natures and Genius's; and, consequently, that those, who have not conquered their Lusts, nor subdued their rebellious Habits, but are taken away in the contest between the law of Sin, and the law of the Mind, that is, when the man is neither wholly alive to God nor Sin, but in the intermediate state, carrying a warr within him, and acting perpetually with a
re.

reluctancy, and adhering sometimes to the one, and then to the other Principle, according as the strength of Natural corruption, or the auxiliaries of Reason prevail upon him; he must conclude, I say, that such Persons as these, dying, cannot be immediately rewarded with the Bliss and Glories of Heaven, because they have not as yet performed the condition upon which that Felicity is entail'd; which is, to be changed and renewed in the spirit of their minds, to be purified throughout, and become holy as God is Holy, partaking of his Nature, and becoming in all things conformable to the Holy Jesus, as to a perfect and compleat Copy of all Virtue and Righteousness; Nor will the Goodness of Almighty God, whose Spirit is alwayes taking hold of every heart, that retains any capacities and dispositions for the reception of it's own Nature, frustrate such auspicious beginnings, but rather cherish and fold them, like a tender mother, in it's loving arms, till it bring them to that due perfection, which alone can render them the proper subjects of Immor.

mortality and Life. It will follow then, that such as these (and such are the greatest part of mankind) are fit and adequate objects of our Prayers; Nor can the small, and only conjectural knowledg which we have of the state of separate Souls, make us ever a whit the more remiss in performing these exercises (which are the only ones we can shew) of love and charity to our departed friends, if we re-mind our selves of what I before hinted, and shall now further prosecute; *viz.* That the unfallen Angels, and the Spirits of good and holy men, departed this life, and all just persons upon Earth, who are daily breathing after, and aspiring to the highest pitch of a Christian life, are one Polity, Society, or Corporation, which reacheth from that Blessed and Glorious Seat of Majesty, which we more eminently call Heaven, to this Globe of earth, whereon we live; so that, all those intermundane Spaces are replenished with several ranks and orders of invisible Agents, who are, as the benign eyes of God, beholding the administration of the affairs of the Earth, and protect-

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ing the sincere lovers of truth from the tyranny and invasion of the Airy Principality; and there is no need we should fancy them beyond the Stars, when they have quitted their bodies; where all that they can do (if haply they can attain so much), is, to be compassionate Spectators of our Calamities, being unable to afford the least relief or succour, but look upon them as not farr distant from us, where they may not only behold the several transactions of men, but really assist and abette their innocent and pious attempts after the divine life and Nature. And the more good and purified they are from the contagion of mortal conceptions, the more compassionate and benign Inspectors will they be of humane affairs and more concerned in their behalf for their advantage and welfare.

Having thus farr discoursed from the reason of the thing it self I may cast in the suffrage of the antient Fathers of the Church, to let you see the Sense of Antiquity, that prayers for the dead were in use even in the early dawning as it were of Christianity: *Tertullian*

de Corona Militis, hath these Words, *Oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis, annua die facimus.* And, in his Book *de Monogamia*; *Pro anima ejus (nempe mariti) oret, & refrigerium interim adpostulet ei, & in prima Resurrectione consortium; & offerat annuis diebus dormitionis ejus. Damascen. Orat. defunctis.*

Οὐ γὰρ ἐσθίει καὶ ὡς ἔτυχε πάντα νομοθετικῶς, καὶ τῇ
 Ἐκκλησίᾳ ὑπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν παύσθαι μαθητῶν πα-
 ρεδίδεται φησὶ δὲ εἶναι τῶν φρακτῶν μυστηρίων, ὧς ἂν
 ποιῶν τὸν ἱερεὺς ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐν πίστι κακοιμημένων, ἵσταται
 αὐτοῖς πολὺ τὸ κέρδιον ἐν τούτῳ, καὶ πολλὴν τὴν
 ἀφίλησιν.

So likewise *Dionys. Arcespag. de Ecclesiast. Hierarch. (mibi) pag. 147, 148.*

Saint *Austin* likewise, in the ninth Book of his *Confessions*, chap. 12. and 13. sets down at large the prayers he made for his mother *Monica*, and her husband *Patricius*.

And if any yet desire further Testimony let them consult the antient Liturgies of the Church, where are set down particular Forms of Prayer for the dead; for such I mean who deceased in the Communion of the Church: *Nec ullus invenitur (says the learned Grotius) alicujus authoritatis Scriptor, qui ei mori contradixerit.* St. *Chrysostome* likewise

likewise in *Homil. ad Pop. Antiochen. ad Hom. 3. in Epist. ad Philipp.* as he is cited by *Cassander* in his *Consultat. p. 239.* affirms that this *Form qua Ecclesia omnibus suis membris in Christo quiescentibus locum refrigerii, & quietis, & pacis postulat*, was of *Apostolical* institution. And although, sayes he *p. 240.* it were not agreed upon by all, In what state the Soul was after her departure from the body; *Omnes tamen hoc officium, ut testimonium charitatis erga defunctum, & ut professionem fidei de immortalitate Animarum & futura Resurrectione, Deo gratum & Ecclesie utile esse judicarunt.* Adde to this (which, in such a case as this may have it's weight) that our blessed Saviour coming into the World to amend and correct the manners of mankind, and to introduce a Religion which should be Universal over the whole world, did, as it were on purpose to gratifie both Jews and Heathens, as well retain whatever was good and laudable in either of their Religions, as expunge whatever was useles or of a bad consequence; and yet we never find either in the History of the Gospels,

or in any credible Author, that ever he reprehended that custome of praying for the Dead, which was in use even at his coming into the world; as the antient Talmudick Form, composed as it's thought by the Jews in their *Babylonian* captivity, and that Apochryphal Writer of the second Book of *Macchab.* chap, 12. sufficiently testifie. And *Calvin* himselfe Instit. 3. c. 5. confesses that Prayer for the dead was in use above a Thousand three hundred years ago.

Those two places, *Ecclesiast.* chap. 11. v. 3, and *Apocalyps.* chap. 14. 13. some make use of to prove that Men immediately upon the dissolution of their Sou's from their bodies go immediately either to Heaven or Hell, and therefore our prayers are impertinent because their state whatever it be, is fixed and irreversible; belong little to that purpose. As for the first, the words of which are these, *If the clouds be full of raine, they empty themselves upon the earth; and if the Tree fall toward the South or toward the North, in the place where the Tree falleth, there it shall be;* it hath
no

no relation to this purpose, but properly belongs to the case of Charity, as *Castellio* hath noted : *Dum abundas largire. Mortuus largiri non poteris, ut lapsa arbor jam nequit in quam velit partem ferri.*

The other likewise as little promotes their Design, if we look well into the words, which are these, *Blessed are the dead which dye in the Lord; from henceforth, yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them* : which verse must have a connexion with the precedent, *ὁὗτοι τῶν ἀγίων ἐσσι* Here is the patience of the Saints, namely, in holding constantly the profession of the faith in the midst of those Persecutions which should shortly come upon them; upon which occasion the Spirit of God accounts them happy who die *αἰνισθῆναι*, quickly, for they hear no more the voice of the oppressor, but are taken away from the evil to come, and rest from their labours, that is, are freed from troubles and persecutions; for so *αἰνισθῆναι* signifies. A like speech, is that *Eccles. 4.* upon mention

tion of the oppressors, and the comforter, it follows v. 2. *Wherefore I praised the dead that are already dead.* Thus Sir I have at last finished that Task you imposed upon me, in the performance of which I shall esteem my self infinitely gratified, by it you will please to account me,

Sir,

June, 25.

Yours &c

1665.

F I N I S

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urs &c.